

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
April 14, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Barron and Mr. Widing were absent. All other members were present.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, REMONSTRATIONS:

1) *Habitat for Humanity - Waiver of the building permit fee for 1818 W. 58th Avenue.* Mr. Hardaway made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Pettit. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

2) *Acknowledge & read the letter on the IRFRA.* Mr. Bushemi read a letter addressed to Honorable Vernon Smith and Indiana House of Representatives. The letter was to object to the passage of the Indiana Religious Freedom Restoration Act (IRFRA). Mr. Hardaway also requested the same process to be followed regarding House Bill 1019 that repeals the common construction wage statute. Discussion regarding these matters followed.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of the Accounts Payable Register Voucher dated April 14, 2015 with the exclusion of APV #114295 in the amount of \$40.65. Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of March 24, 2015. Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Hardaway. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

BUDGET & FINANCE:

Mr. Pettit had no report.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Mr. Goralczyk read the LPA consulting contract in its entirety. Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Hardaway. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS:

Mrs. Miano had no report.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

Mr. Pettit had no report.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Mr. Widing was absent, no report. Mrs. Miano shared information from a letter by Commander Kijurna to Chief Petruch in regards to accommodation case #2015-0375 which provided recognition for outstanding police work that was performed by Corporal Jeff Bunnell, Officer Merkel, and Officer Hanner. The extraordinary efforts of these officers lead to the arrest of three armed robbery suspects. All involved are commended for a job well done and will receive a level 2 accommodation. Chief Petruch responded by thanking all for such super great police work.

Mr. Miano made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Hardaway. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Chief Petruch announced they are selling tee shirts to raise funds to support the canine program. The shirts are \$20.00 anyone interested can see Officer Vasel.

PARKS & RECREATION:

Mrs. Miano announced that they had a meeting on April 10, 2015 with Senior Citizens, which she refers to the group as "Keenagers". They discussed ideas for bus trips, events planned and self-defense class.

Ms. Orlich provided an update for the upcoming park events including Trash & Treasure sales, summer concerts, Independence Day parade and park trips. Additional information can be found on our Town of Merrillville website under the 2015 Spring/Summer brochure as well as our new Facebook page.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS:

In Matt Lake's absence, Mr. Goralczyk read the Stormwater report dated April 14, 2015. Robinson Engineering is working on a set of plans for the 53rd Court Lift Station. He went on to provide an update for the Ross Meadow Farms project regarding drainage issues. They are also working on drainage improvements at 73rd Ave & Taft St. The 2015 Rain Barrel Program continues. Information regarding the program will be in the town newsletter & website as well as the newspaper. Brochures will also be available at each of the town departments. The pick-up date will be Thursday, April 30, 2015 at Stormwater resource center. Residents can contact the Stormwater office with any questions.

ELECTIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Mrs. Miano announced the Madison & 73rd Ave groundbreaking will take place on April 24th at 11 a.m. at St. Constantine & Helen. There will be a light lunch and refreshments served. All are welcome to attend.

Mr. Pettit announced the state of the region address, sponsored by the Crossroads Regional Chamber, will be held on Thursday, April 16th at 5:30 at the Radisson Hotel.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Mr. Pettit provided an update from the plot committee meeting for Ameriplex at the Crossroads. He went on to say that the northwest corner of Georgia & 101st will be the new location for the Pipefitters Union. Demolition work will begin at the old Wicks Furniture for the construction of the new Ashley Furniture. The old Handy Andy location is in the process of being re-roofed for Ray's Movers. Starbucks will also be going into Meijer and Save-a-Lot grocery store is now open for business.

UTILITY LIAISON:

Mrs. Barron was absent, no report.

ABANDONED PROPERTIES:

Mr. Hardaway requested that Mr. Bushemi draft a letter to Asset Recovery Inc, owners of the property located at 122 W 55th Ave, asking what the intentions are for this property. Mr. Hardaway would hope to have this location demolished due to the poor condition of the property.

Mr. Hardaway stated there are vacant lots located on 58th Ave and Connecticut St that have been up for multiple tax sales unsuccessful. He would like to solicitant the county commissioner in an effort to obtain the lots and donate them to Habitat to Humanity. Mr. Hardaway made a motion to approve drafting a letter to the county commissioner and was seconded by Mr. Pettit. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

GENERAL ORDERS:

FIRST READING ORDINANCES:

Ord. 15-10: An Ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, amending ordinance 15-08 and fixing the Parks non-reverting program fees for the year 2015. Mr. Spann made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Pettit. There was no discussion. The motion carried by a 5-0 roll call vote.

SECOND READING ORDINANCES:

Ord. 15-09: An Ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana, petitioning and approving the addition of certain lands to the Merrillville Conservancy District for the purpose of obtaining sanitary sewage disposal service. Mr. Spann made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mrs. Miano. There was no discussion or public comment. The motion carried by a 5-0 roll call vote.

RESOLUTIONS: None

BZA ACTIONS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Acceptance of the proposal for ARC document solutions was presented. Discussion followed related to the proposal and process involved. Mr. Hardaway made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Pettit. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

All public comment is recorded on an audio file and kept on file in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office at Town Hall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Environmental Resource Committee meeting, April 16, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.

Plan Commission meeting, April 21, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, April 22, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Town Council meeting, April 28, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned.

Tom Goralczyk, President

Eugene Guernsey, Clerk-Treasurer